

"THE BLUE AND THE GRAY."

BY LILLIAN H. FICKES.

Upon the Congressional action of March 24, 1896. Perhaps a third of a century is long enough to hold a grudge: Perhaps, so late, the olive might succeed the palm—leave God to judge. The long grass bends over both to-day. The victorious blue and the vanquished gray—Leave God to judge.

The rebel bold, the defender brave, have long enough upheld the grudge: No patriot heart shall beat less true for this kindly act—leave God to judge. The flag that waves over us to-day, Shows the reign of blue—and there is no gray—Leave God to judge.

AT THE CAPTAIN'S GRAVE.

BY GEORGE T. PACKARD.

Does he miss the voices of his comrades, Or long for the front of the fight? Does he see the flag there above him, And the stone so cold and so white?

Why read the fading inscription, With memory all aghast? Guns thundered, shells shrieked, this morning, And not thirty years ago!

Those eyes! They blazed with his purpose As he swept up the flaming hill. "This way, boys!" Then fell that quick silence, And the hero heart was still.

But I know, when sounds the last trumpet, And arise the awakened dead, He'll take his place in the column With the boys he loved and led.

A FEDERATION OF PEACE.

BY MRS. M. L. RAYNE.

"You won't forget, Arthur, what you promised me for Decoration day?"

"A ride to Woodlawn with the children? But, Margie, we have no soldier grave to decorate."

"Yes, dear, we have. I have adopted one."

"I don't understand, Margie."

"You remember that one lone grave beyond the monument on the hill slope? We noticed last year that it had been overlooked, and I found out the reason. No one knew that it was a soldier's grave, because it was so apart from the rest. I looked the matter up. The man was a soldier of the same company to which my father belonged—my father, who fell fighting for his country when I was in my cradle! So I have my grave to decorate to-morrow."

"All right, little wife, you shall have the best box of flowers to be had for love or money."

"Give them for love, Arthur, love of our dear country, and of those who fought her battles and left us a legacy of peace."

"What a good commanding general you would have made, Margie, with your patriotic spirit!"

"Oh, it's easy enough to be patriotic in piping times of peace," answered his wife, "but you and I are old enough to have heard the echoes of shot and shell. We imbibed patriotism with our mother's milk, but with these children it is different. They know only the splendor and glory of war. They are old enough now to be taught its reality, so that they may not only learn to live like soldiers, but to die like them."

The two children, a girl of 12 and a boy of 14, listened with interest and curiosity, for to them war was indeed a splendid pageant, in which music, flags and glittering uniforms made up a grand tableau, and they looked forward with great anticipation to Decoration day, when they could witness the ceremony of strewing flowers on the graves of the honored dead.

Arthur Lyman felt rather small when he left home after having heard his wife's oration. It seemed to him almost as if he were to blame for being only five years old at the time of the war, and not shouldering arms and going into the battle. But he had no need to be ashamed of his vocation, for he was a soldier in the bravest sense of the word—a soldier of peace.

It is a common saying that a man is often his own worst enemy.

Arthur knew that this meant. His haughty, impetuous disposition was continually getting him into trouble, and sometimes it took all his wits to get out again. He had at last found help by helping others. A white-haired



THE OLD MAN ASKED FOR DESK ROOM.

man had come to his office one day and asked for desk room. He had no money and was blind. The presumption of the man in thus demanding assistance surprised Arthur so much as to render him for the moment speechless, and he looked at the intruder in blank amazement. If a blind man can hypnotize, then Arthur was hypnotized into giving the old man the space he wanted. There the blind stranger set up a little stock of pencils and stationery, and at the end of a month tendered a small rental for his stand.

On this morning, when Arthur entered his office, he saw that the little stand was gone; and that his blind protégé, upon whom he had come to rely as a friend, was not present. It worried him so much that he sent a clerk off to the old man's lodging, but he was not there.

"Something has happened to him—he has met with an accident," Arthur said,

anxiously, and he determined to look up his whereabouts as soon as possible.

He had never mentioned the blind man to his wife, for it struck him as a Quixotic sort of venture at which she might laugh. Besides, it was a business deal in one way, and belonged to the store, where Arthur left all business details under lock and key. But this evening he was so disturbed by the loss of the old man that he related the incident to Margie, and she suggested that the hospital be searched as soon as Memorial day was over.

The little family went to Woodlawn the next day, and formed in themselves an interesting part of the grand



"IT'S MY OLD BLIND MAN!"

federation of peace which was being celebrated with flowers and flags, and beating drums, in memory of the silent heroes who long have slumbered beneath. To the lonely grave on the hillside, which Margie had "adopted," as she quaintly expressed it, they took their way, laden with the flowers Arthur had provided. While the children distributed the floral tributes on the narrow mound, Margie seated herself and read aloud a poem she had cut from the morning paper at the breakfast table. It was so appropriate that Arthur accused her of writing it. The last stanza ran thus:

There's a grave on the hillside, Father, Thy searching voice shall yet Rouse up the sleeping soldier For Thou dost not forget. There's a lonely grave on the hillside, But, oh, before Thy throne The humble shall be honored, The unknown shall be known.

Suddenly Arthur gave a loud exclamation of "Look there! That is he!" They looked, expecting to see a general of the army in splendid regalia, but they saw only a little band of veterans in their faded uniforms, led by a blind man who played melting military music upon a fife.

"It's my old blind man—I never knew that he had been a soldier. He never told me," Arthur said, breathlessly.

"He looks like a hero," said his wife, enthusiastically, and she did not take her eyes from that noble and resigned face until her husband had wailed the old man and said to him:

"So I have found you and you cheated me nicely, never telling me you were once a soldier."

"I am a soldier—once a soldier always one," replied the blind man, proudly, "but sir, I did not mean to deceive you—it is the fortune of war that caused me to be poor and alone in my old age."

"Not alone," said Margie, laying her hand gently on the faded sleeve, "not while my husband and I live."

The old soldier started violently as he heard her voice. He took off his soldier's cap, stood erect, with one hand raised to heaven.

"Who speaks?" he cried, "whose voice is it? Margaret, my wife—oh, God, I cannot see you!"

His weakness was pitiful—tears streamed from his sightless eyes, but his new friends soothed him, and at last he consented to accompany them home and, as Margie said, "be adopted."

He was very grateful, and told them his story, the husband and wife sitting on either side of him and the children at his feet.

"I was a soldier in the Army of the Potomac, and it was at the siege of Petersburg, when reconnoitering with a field glass, that a splinter from an exploding shell struck the glass and shattered both my eyes. While I was in the hospital my wife and child died, and for a long time—how long I cannot tell—I was a wreck mentally and physically. At this moment I have not a relative on earth. When I heard your voice to-day—he reached out gropingly and clasped Margie's clinging hand—"It reminded me of her—my wife!"

When Margie heard the name of her adopted soldier—Darius Poole—she became thoughtful.

"My father was a soldier and that was his name. He died at the battle of Petersburg. We may be related. I never knew him, for I was only a babe when he went to the war, and on my mother's death I was taken and reared by strangers."

"What regiment was he in?" asked the old man, excitedly.

"That I do not know, but I have papers which belonged to my mother containing all particulars. Gen. Hartranft was his division commander. I have tried to learn the particulars of his death, but could only find his name among the hospital dead at Petersburg."

Here Arthur interferred, dreading the shock of joy it would occasion his wife when she should first entertain the idea—so plausible to him—that the soldier she had already adopted might be her own father.

Nothing further was said that night, but it was a very happy household that settled down to rest when it came time for "lights out."

And it was only yesterday that the Lyman children were heard saying to their companions:

"It has been Decoration day every day since grandfather came home from the war!"

IMPROMPTU CELEBRATION.

BY ELLIS PARKER BUTLER.

Abraham Lincoln White, aged six, stood in the middle of the muddy road in front of his mammy's shanty, head erect, shoulders thrown back and his torn hat dripping with the rain.

It was late in the afternoon of Decoration day, and Abraham Lincoln White had but recently returned from town, where he had been one of the most thoroughly interested spectators of the ceremonies. He had a very vague idea of the meaning of it all, but his small black head was full of the idea of decorating the graves, and he felt a huge desire to do some decorating on his own account.

Consequently when mammy had taken off his Sunday garments, and he had scrambled into his old clothes, he set about it.

Flags, flowers, bright sashes and gayly decked horses; these had been most strongly impressed on his mind.

Flag he had not, but one of his mammy's big red bandanas on a broken broom handle made a good substitute. A bunch of snowballs from the bush in the yard comprised the flowers; a strip of blue calico made an excellent sash, and a stick was metamorphosed into a prancing steed.

Thus arrayed the procession started down the muddy road. The band played, the flag waved, the steed pranced, and the flowers nodded and the whole procession, complete in one very wet and muddy little dandy, moved towards the only grave in the neighborhood. Unfortunately, just as the parade reached the grave it fell headlong in the mud, and it was a mass of mud when a horseman dismounted and picked it up.



It was the colonel himself, and he laughed as he put the muddy procession on its feet.

"Well! well! Abe," he said, "what are you doing way off here in the mud?"

"It's a procession," said Abe, "I is, an' I's goin' to decorate the grave!"

"What grave?" asked the colonel; "there are no graves hereabouts."



PLANTING THE BANDANA.

"Yes, they is," said Abe, "they's one in there," and he pointed through the fence.

"You are right," said the colonel, "there is. And I will join the procession, my boy."

And the proud, dignified colonel and the dirty little negro clambered over the rail fence side by side and planted the bandana, and laid the flowers on the solitary grave.

And although the little negro grinned during it all the colonel's eyes were moist and his hands arranged the flowers tenderly.

For it was the grave of old White Nancy, the gallant mare that had borne him through many a hard-fought battle.

DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE.

Again the day that should bring all men into sympathetic harmony has come around with its golden memories that time, so far from diminishing, beautifully enhances and sentimentally ennobles. Tender feelings mingling with pride and a loyal sense of gratitude inspire a lofty state of mind, and to these no man not sordidly selfish should be insensible on a day set apart as a memorial of patriotic valor and devoted manhood, and of life surrounded by the country's weal. So remote and shadowy is the epoch of the civil war that even they that participated in its dangers and hardships and had its horrors stamped with graphic force imperishably upon their minds may hardly think of it other than as of a wonderfully intense and realistic dream. The empty sieve, the missing leg, the bent frame and broken health are eloquent reminders of the stern fact, it is true, but it is a benevolence and a compensation of nature that adversity and pain and loss soften into counterfeits of beauty and sweetness and love as they recede further into the perspective of human experience.

Love of country is love of countryman; and we who visit the graves of the soldier dead do so less to pay deference to memory than to give pledge to the future. It is respect to the living that bids us revere the dead, that lofty respect that arises from our recognition of man in God's image as our brother, and our knowledge of the truth that the animating spirit is the heir to the eternities.

Memorial day, says the Chicago Inter Ocean, tends to restore the moral and personal equilibrium disturbed by the selfish activities of life. The spirit of it is a leveler, an eliminator of

DECORATION DAY.

BY EVA BEST.

Hark, how the bells of a nation ring! Hark, how the tongues of a nation sing! Songs of no triumph, with joyous tilt, But saddest and tenderest songs they know

Of brave, young heroes, whose blood was spilt

On terrible battle-fields long ago— Bells, toll ye softly, Tongues, chant ye low

Of brave, young heroes of long ago!

Backward the thoughts of a nation turn, Brightly the fires of memory burn

On love's own altar: while long, long years Drop swiftly away, and we, in the glow Of fond recollection, see sadly through tears



The shadowy faces of long ago! Dimly before us March to and fro

The forms of the heroes of long ago! Mother and father whose brave son died, Brother and sister and widowed bride, Comrade and friend of the blue and gray—

Soldiers who fell as they faced the foe— Gather together to weep and pray For heroes they lost in the long ago! Under the mounds So green and low

Lie heroes they lost in the long ago!

Flowers of springtime, so rich and rare, Showers of blossoms, so bright and fair, Roses of yellow, and pink, and red, Lilies as white as the winter's snow

Drift odorless petals above our dead— Our brave young heroes of long ago! Brightest and sweetest Flowers that grow

Cover our heroes of long ago! After the wearisome toll of life, After the battle and worldly strife, Past the dark tide, on whose golden sands The lights of the heavenly harbor glow, We'll find them at last, and we'll clasp the hands

Of brave, young heroes of long ago! Transfigured mortals— But we shall know

Our brave, young heroes of long ago!

AFTER MANY YEARS.

BY ELISA ARMSTRONG.

It was mid-afternoon of Decoration day, and the little company which had been adorning the graves was scattered about the small cemetery.

A tall, gaunt woman, bearing the marks of old maidenhood, had pinned up the skirt of her black dress and drawn off her shabby gloves. She was kneeling beside a grave, and with careful hands pulling up the weeds. The headstone was marked "Private John Atkins, Company A, 4th Illinois; died April 3, 1862."

The stone was new, though the date upon it was 34 years old. About the grave was a border of violets.

"I'm glad it's a nice headstone," the woman said, aloud. She paused, looking up, as a black shadow fell across the grave. A stout, complacent-looking woman in new mourning looked down upon her.

"It makes me feel low," said the woman, "I'll cry presently; that'll do me good."

"Related to him?" asked the other woman, quickly.

"I was going to marry him. I've always wanted to come here, an' I lost my husband died, so I say to my daughter, 'Marthy, I—you ain't sick, are ye?'"

The other woman, turning sickly white, had risen to her feet. "I nursed him!" she cried, "I was with him when he died!"

"I'm glad to hear it. Nice headstone, ain't it? Did the G. A. R.—"



"Mebbe there's some mistake."

"I put it up; earned every cent of it!"

"Women always liked him," said the stout woman, complacently, "though he cared for none of 'em but me."

The other woman fumbled with a cheap locket hanging about her neck, pulled it out and displayed a tintype of a handsome boy.

"Mebbe there's some mistake," she faltered, "I—I sent all his things home, but I kept this."

"That's him. I've got one myself somewhere; he sent it to me the week afore he was shot. Are you married?"

"No," her eyes were on the grave at her feet.

"I had a good husband; he left me well off. Goin', are ye?"

The other woman moved on, without a word.

"Kind o' cracked, I guess," said the stout woman, looking after her. "It beats all how fond women always were of John."



The Day And The People.

As the two stones upon the epoch of the high priest of the Jews were a memorial of the mercy and the everlasting care of Jehovah, so Decoration day has been fixed in the hearts of the American people as an eternal memorial of the heroic self-sacrifice of those who more than a generation ago lay down their lives for the cause of freedom. The oft-repeated implication of the ingratitude of nations and kings does not rest in any sense with this free people, who, enjoying as no other nation that has been, or is, the priceless boon of liberty, are properly able to estimate as well as to appreciate the price of freedom. Time has subdued, if not altogether removed, the passions and the prejudices evoked by the demon of war, so that former foes gladly gather to pay homage to the heroes who fell that the union might live. The minor causes are forgotten in the glory of the achievements of those who fought and died, as well as those who fought and survived.

America needs no triumphal arch or towering monument as perpetual memorial of the heroism of her sons; for deeper than the mark of the chisel in the obelisks of Egypt are set the records of their doings in the hearts of those who enjoy the benefits of union and liberty. Just so long as this people is free; just so long as admiration is had for courage and devotion, every recurring Memorial day will be set apart as one of cherished and grateful recollection for the heroes of Bull Run, Gettysburg, Chattanooga, the Wilderness and Petersburg—all the hundreds of battles that made up the sum of the late civil war.

Day that comes at the full maturity of the springtime, when nature has assumed her richest robes; day of blue sky and warm soft air; day suggestive of all that may be glad and bright—fitting is it that such a time shall be the esto perpetuo of this free people.

True, there are hearts that yet mourn the loved and the lost, Rachel weeping for their children that are not; but above all, with all, is the sublime thought that in the death of these soldiers came a heterogenesis, a new birth of the nation in peace, amity and bonds of union that are indissoluble. They who came not with their shields were borne upon them. The children of those who died take their own children by the hand and lead them to the grassy mounds of the soldier dead and say with pride, "these died for their altars and their fires." So being dead they yet speak to the living, keeping alive those coils of patriotism which, upon occasion, shall spring into a full flame.

So let the flowers be strewn, the banners wave, hymns be sung and eulogiums be rendered; thus let the living pay homage to the dead; for that nation is always safe which places its heroes above the price of gold and of silver. As the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the church, so the blood of our soldier dead has become the life of the union that is—one and inseparable, now and always.

Time goes by with ceaseless tread. The living heroes of the war have silver mingled with the gray of their hair. Only too soon shall they join their sleeping comrades. While they live let it not be forgotten that equally with the dead they share the honor and the glory of the struggle. When they are gone let their memory be as precious as that of those who yielded up their lives on the fields of battle.

WILLIAM ROSSER CORRIE.

Lesson of Decoration Day. The lesson of Memorial day is to keep fresh the memories of our illustrious dead, to preserve intact what they fought for and saved, to keep alive the patriotic spirit, and resolve, in the immortal words of Abraham Lincoln, "that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Grant's Troublesome Soldiers. Gen. Grant used to tell a story of a soldier in a certain regiment during the war who was continually bothering him by asking favors. Grant one day said to him: "Look here; I believe you are the most troublesome man in the union army."

The man quickly replied: "Why, that's funny, sir!"

"Funny; how do you make it out funny?"

"Because it is just what the enemy says about you."—Harper's Round Table.

Men in Gray Preponderate. "It has often been said of the veteran soldiers, when they have appeared on parade, as upon Decoration day," said an observer, "why, how many young men there are among them! but that cannot be said many years longer. There are still to be seen in the ranks numbers of men comparatively young in appearance, but I was struck on last Decoration day by the number who have now grown gray."

In Memoriam. My broken soldiers, made of lead, Are buried in the garden bed, And lovely flowers o'er them play. For this is Decoration day.

—Harper's Round Table

A Thought for the Day. The sweet remembrance of the just Shall flourish when he sleeps in dust.